

Christopher Botta
Mayor

Deirdre Dillon
Council President
Health, Education & Social Services

Vanessa Jachzel
Councilwoman
Finance & Administration

William Jones
Councilman
Public & Governmental Relations



Ken Tyburczy
Councilman
Utilities, Building & Grounds

Joseph Verdone
Councilman
Building, Planning & Zoning

Harry Weber
Councilman
Public Safety

A MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL

Dear Resident:

Your 2014 tax bill is comprised of four separate parts: Ramsey Schools, Ramsey Public Library, Ramsey Municipal Services and Bergen County government. While we, the elected officials of the Borough, receive the majority of comments about taxes, it should be noted that **only the municipal services portion is administered by your Mayor and Council.**

YOUR PROPOSED 2014 TAX BILL IS DIVIDED AS FOLLOWS:

2% RAMSEY PUBLIC LIBRARY

67% SCHOOL SYSTEM

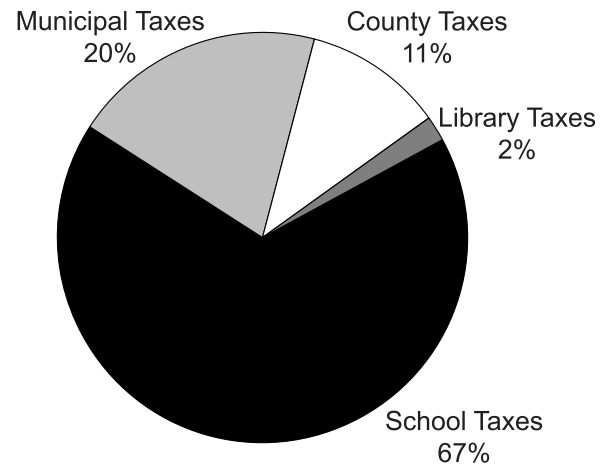
RAMSEY BOARD OF EDUCATION

20% MUNICIPAL SERVICES

RAMSEY POLICE, LOCAL ROADS, SANITATION, RECYCLING, RECREATION, TOWN ADMINISTRATION, VOLUNTEER EMERGENCY SERVICES, HEALTH SERVICES, ETC.

11% BERGEN COUNTY GOVERNMENT

COUNTY HIGHWAYS, HOSPITALS, LAW ENFORCEMENT, COUNTY ADMINISTRATION, PARKS & RECREATIONAL FACILITIES



The Mayor and Council continue to work to hold down Municipal expenses. In 2014, there will be a modest tax increase over 2013 of less than 2%. The municipal tax rate, excluding the library portion, would increase from .539 to .549 (1.86% change). On a home assessed at \$433,785 (the average Ramsey assessment), the 2014 annual increase would amount to \$43 for the municipal services portion of your tax bill. This does not include school taxes or county taxes. The Ramsey Board of Education and the Bergen County Board of Chosen Freeholders, respectively, control those budgets.

As your elected representatives, we face the ongoing challenge of making difficult choices in the provision of municipal services to ensure municipal government costs remain under control, while still maintaining a high level and quality of municipal services for our community. This 2014 budget shows an increase in overall budget size from 2013, however most of that increase is offset by approximately \$700,000 of non-recurring direct revenue reimbursements for grants and shared service payments the Borough is receiving for the South Central and Oak Street projects completed in 2013. The Borough will appropriate those funds to pay-down the interim financing it

had in place until the reimbursements are received. Therefore, while receipt of the funds and corresponding pay-down of debt increase the size of the budget, they have no impact on taxes. This highlights our continued efforts to seek grants or shared service opportunities, wherever possible, to lower the impact on Ramsey taxpayers for necessary infrastructure improvements.

We continue funding for our capital and infrastructure projects conservatively, so as to minimize the impact upon taxpayers while providing necessary replacement and upgrades of equipment and facilities. We have kept our debt-position relatively low and certainly far below what the State allows for a community our size, by utilizing a dual approach of aggressively repaying older (more expensive) debt and taking advantage of historically low interest rates for new projects and equipment purchases. In 2013, the Borough utilized debt for some major capital expenditures for equipment and infrastructure with significant useful lives. For example, we borrowed for the reconstruction of the municipal pool and acquisition of two fire pumper trucks, which respectively replace a pool asset that was 50 years old and replaces pumper trucks with over 25 years of service. In 2014, to help balance these recent borrowings, we are increasing the capital improvement line in the budget by \$635,000 which should allow the Borough to currently pay for most of the Borough's capital expenditures this year. This will result in the Borough ending 2014 with a lower debt position than year-end 2013. We will work to continue the effective management needed to balance the Municipal Budget and the Borough's overall debt level.

With state aid flat for a few years, we continue to concentrate our efforts towards reducing discretionary spending and finding efficiencies wherever possible to help offset mandated cost increases, contractual, and statutory obligations. This year presents its own unique budget challenges with a number of line item increases related to such factors as winter storm costs, the County-mandated tax assessment revaluation, mandated retirement and pension payments and increased health care costs. All of these items are incorporated in the current budget and their overall impact is mitigated by other line item savings to keep overall appropriations, without direct revenue offsets, below 2%.

One item of note, which you will hear more about in the upcoming months, is the Borough wide tax assessment revaluation. Since more than ten years have passed since Ramsey's last revaluation, the County has ordered Ramsey to do a town-wide revaluation, which should take place during 2014. The timing for the start of the revaluation process is predicated upon the State's final approval of Borough submittals, which we are waiting to receive. Once we have final approvals, further information on the timing and process will be communicated to you.

As your elected officials, we are highly cognizant of our obligation to wisely manage residents' tax dollars, and we maintain our focus upon managing these expenditures as conservatively as possible without sacrificing long-term value. Through our careful long-term planning, Ramsey is in significantly better financial shape than some of our neighboring communities. Your Mayor and Council have worked diligently to produce a leaner, more efficient municipal government, which will still be able to deliver the essential municipal services which our residents have come to expect. Much of this credit belongs to our dedicated and hard working municipal employees, who have worked with the governing body to reduce operational costs and improve efficiencies, while maintaining high standards of performance.

The full budget is available for your inspection in several places. You may view the budget in its entirety on our borough website (www.ramseynj.com). In addition, five copies of the budget are on reserve at the Ramsey Free Public Library. Residents are invited to comment on any aspect of the budget at Mayor and Council meetings, or by letter or e-mail.

Thank you for your continued cooperation and support,

Mayor and Council

PROPOSED MUNICIPAL TAX DATA COMPARISON

	2013 Actual Total Tax Amount	2013 Actual Tax Rate	2014 Total Tax Amount	2014 Proposed Tax Rate
PUBLIC LIBRARY	\$1,128,247	\$0.040	\$1,129,402	\$0.040
MUNICIPAL SERVICES	\$15,281,295	\$0.539	\$15,633,785	\$0.549
TOTAL	\$16,409,542	\$0.579	\$16,763,187	\$0.589

The following information is a more detailed overview of the municipal budget:

MUNICIPAL REVENUE COMPARISON

	<u>2014</u>	<u>2013</u>
Alcoholic Beverage Licenses	\$34,000	\$34,000
Other Administrative Licenses	\$41,000	\$33,000
Construction Code Official Permits	\$550,000	\$490,000
Other Permits & Fees	\$45,000	\$42,000
Municipal Court Fines	\$118,000	\$130,000
Interest and Cost on Taxes	\$150,000	\$150,000
Energy Receipts Tax	\$1,474,471	\$1,474,471
Consolidated Municipal Property Tax Relief Act	\$0	\$0
Interest on Investments and Deposits	\$10,000	\$10,000
Cable Franchise Fee	\$205,000	\$200,000
Municipal Occupancy Tax	\$185,000	\$141,000
Life Hazard Use Fees	\$69,000	\$60,000
Clean Communities Grant Program	-----	\$7,800
Various Grants	\$9,111	\$35,987
Recycling Tonnage Grant	\$48,368	\$44,937
Governor's Council on Alcoholism & Drug Abuse Grant	\$9,876	\$9,876
Alcohol Education & Rehabilitation Fund	\$2,692	\$3,020
Recycling Revenue (1)	-----	\$20,000
Receipts from Delinquent Taxes	\$550,000	\$500,000
Utilization of Contingency Reserve (2)	\$3,050,000	\$2,950,000
Reserve to Pay Bonds & Notes	\$701,500	\$112,500
Amount of be Raised by Taxes for Support of Municipal Budget	\$15,633,785	\$15,281,295
Amount to be Raised by Taxes for Free Public Library	\$1,129,402	\$1,128,247
TOTAL GENERAL REVENUES	\$24,016,204	\$22,858,134

1. RECYCLING REVENUE- A change in the recycling contract structure, recycling revenue will now appear as a credit against Recycling expense, rather than a revenue item.
2. CONTINGENCY RESERVE - We anticipate utilizing \$3,050,000.00 of anticipated revenue in the 2014 Municipal Budget. Contingency Reserve is generated by unused appropriations and unanticipated revenues through last year's Municipal Budget. This reserve is utilized to offset municipal taxes on a year-to-year basis.

MUNICIPAL EXPENSE COMPARISON

GENERAL GOVERNMENT	2014	2013
Administrative & Executive	\$386,000	\$400,000
Mayor & Council	\$52,000	\$52,000
Borough Clerk	\$258,000	\$253,000
Finance & Administration	\$240,000	\$240,000
Audit Services	\$47,000	\$47,000
Computer Maintenance & Data Services	\$102,000	\$105,000
Collection & Assessment of Taxes	\$565,100	\$335,100
Legal Services	\$190,000	\$190,000
Engineering	\$225,000	\$222,000
LAND USE ADMINISTRATION		
Planning Board	\$78,000	\$70,000
Zoning Board	\$10,000	\$10,000
INSURANCE	\$2,485,000	\$2,440,000
PUBLIC SAFETY		
Police, Prosecutor and Courts, and 911	\$4,982,000	\$5,095,500
Emergency Management	\$133,500	\$133,500
Fire and Fire Protection	\$413,500	\$387,500
First Aid Contribution	\$97,000	\$97,000
Construction Official	\$415,000	\$385,000
PUBLIC WORKS		
Road Maintenance, Resurfacing and Sidewalks	\$1,453,000	\$1,316,000
Shade Tree Commission	\$150,000	\$165,000
Recycling	\$306,000	\$305,000
Garbage & Trash Removal	\$550,000	\$600,000
Building & Grounds	\$715,000	\$769,000
Vehicle Maintenance	\$503,500	\$494,500
HEALTH SERVICES		
Board of Health	\$160,000	\$157,500
Visiting Nurses	\$17,000	\$17,000
Environmental Commission	\$8,000	\$8,000
Dog & Cat Regulation	\$20,000	\$20,000
Drug Abuse Program and Other Human Services	\$36,000	\$39,000
PARKS & RECREATION		
Board of Recreation Commission	\$122,000	\$126,500
Other Programs	\$173,200	\$162,900
PURCHASE VARIOUS DEPARTMENT EQUIPMENT	\$300,000	\$274,576
UTILITIES AND LANDFILL FEES	\$1,525,000	\$1,510,000
CONTINGENCY	\$5,000	\$5,000
DEFERRED CHARGES AND STATUTORY	\$2,320,456	\$2,044,640
LIBRARY	\$1,129,402	\$1,128,247
GRANTS OFFSET BY REVENUES	\$70,046	\$101,621
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND	\$1,100,000	\$465,000
DEBT SERVICE AND DEFERRED CHARGES	\$1,173,500	\$1,186,050
RESERVE FOR UNCOLLECTED TAXES	\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000
TOTAL GENERAL APPROPRIATIONS	\$24,016,204	\$22,858,134

Borough of Ramsey

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Ramsey, NJ 07446

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